

Winooski Tactical Basin Plan Review

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Question

What are the dynamics behind the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan and governing parties involved in its management and implementation? The dynamics include who is involved, how they do their job, and with what funding.

Background

The Tactical Basin Plan for the Winooski River Basin is a collaborative effort of stakeholders and community members within the basin to restore and protect water quality of the surface water in their river basin. The stakeholders and community members come together to form the Winooski River Basin water council and are involved in planning and maintaining water quality. The water council consists of organizations of volunteers such as the Friends of the Winooski River to federal organizations such as the USDA Groups and organizations involved in the water council and planning are stakeholders because they all have efforts of their own, separate of the water council, to support the river basin out of a general concern for conservation and water quality., the mixture of these local, state, and federal organizations creates a complex system through which planning and funding is carried out to benefit the Winooski River Basin. The advantage of planning at this level is that all non-point sources of pollution can be considered. The significance of looking at the Tactical Basin Plan for Winooski is that understanding the dynamics of what goals are set and how and to what extent they are reached allows for an analysis of the Tactical Basin Planning process as a vehicle for improving water quality in the Winooski River Basin.

Methods

I went about answering this question by investigating the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan and related documents such as appendices and tables showing funding sources and solutions to water quality problems in that document. I also used Watershed Council Meeting Minutes obtained from interviewing the basin planner responsible for the Tactical Basin Plans Karen Bates. As the research went on it became a focus to interview directors of “Friends” organizations involved in the Watershed Council and even the stewardship of the waters in the Winooski River Basin that predated the Tactical Basin Plans. The analysis of the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan began by examining the groups involved in the Tactical Basin Planning process; I began my examination by systematically researching each organization to determine their role, source of funding, size, expertise, vagueness, mission, and jurisdiction. I organized the data on the water council characteristics in an excel sheet to facilitate analysis for the current question and future questions. This data will be used to study the dynamics of parties involved in management and implementation of the Tactical Basin Plan because looking at aspects like size, role, and jurisdiction will also reveal a lot about what kind of influence the organization has throughout the management and implementation process or within the Tactical Basin Plan.

Conclusion

The fact of the matter is there are no dynamics behind the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan. The plan is a collaboration of all the strategies and problems that were already being undertaken. Actions and funding happening in the plans were already in action and when organizations or individuals want to see something done they take to a system that out lies the plan. The Tactical Basin Plans are used for guidance to some degree but the most notable use seems to be the acquisition of funds being that if a strategy is in the plan it holds a better chance of receiving funds.

- The system that exists seperate from the Winooski Tactical Basin Plan is focused around grass roots organizations such as the Friend of the Mad River and Friends of the Winooski River.
- Organizations in the outlying systems haven't found the plans helpful for implementation or even developing new partnerships.
- There are different formats for the Tactical Basin Plans: an old one, a current one, and a new one which has only been used for the White River Tactical Basin Plan. The new format involves more science and aims to be more coherent and focused.

Future Directions

Future directions for this research would be an analysis of the outlying system that actually sees to implementation and stewardship in the river basins. Another direction this research could take is to compare Tactical Basin Plans such as the ones for Winooski and Missisquoi.

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